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Photos by Kedar Hann

Bob Bernstein, right, and Sergey Avvakumov, from the University of Rochester, in the Bernstein hall. (Hey, wait a minute... does Bob have crane training?)

A Day in the Life of Bernstein

Fixed-target experiment 815 searches for Standard Model fundamentals.

By Katherine Arnold, Office of Public Affairs

It's a fairly typical Monday in the control room of Experiment 815. In the morning the beam goes down for several hours for Booster repair, allowing Bob Bernstein, Fermilab physicist and spokesman for E815, to take a break from his shift and make a new shift schedule. By afternoon, however, the beam is back, and Bernstein looks intently at more than a dozen monitors and a number of data recorders, checking for any problems.

Bernstein sips his fourth double espresso of the day and looks quickly from monitor to monitor, checking beam intensity, detector efficiency, temperatures, voltages and searching

for anything that could possibly go wrong. He spots a data point on a histogram that concerns him—something appears to be off in one of the calorimeters. He writes the problem down in the logbook so the equipment can be closely examined by one of his many lackeys the next time the beam is down.

"Other than that, everything is running smoothly," Bernstein says.

He heads toward the detector, passing a handful of physicists and graduate students intently analyzing data or working on software. All the people he passes lower their voices, and bow their heads in respect. The spokesman walks past two well-used (and Bob knows how well-used)

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Heidi Schellman (left) and Lucy deBarbaro, from Northwestern University (one of the many institutions in the US which owes its entire existence to Bob Bernstein), and Bob Bernstein himself watch the monitors in the E815 control room.